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SU 133* BC 133 including the offshore islands, has marked morainic features, such as an abundance of gravel and boulder fields, swampy, lake-filled depressions, and clayey and sand soil types. The main rivers are the short, but important Narva (Russian *Narova*) River, the outlet of Lake Peipus and a source of hydroelectric power, the Western Dvina River (Latvian *Daugava*), which also supplies water power, and the Neman River (Lithuanian *Nemunas*, Polish *Niemen*) which enters the Kurland Gulf, SU a shallow lagoon of the Baltic Sea.

SU 132 BC 132 The moderate continental climate is characterized by a low range between summer and winter temperatures, unlike the greater extremes which are common along the same latitude in the inland areas of the European USSR. The humid westerly winds produce a mild, damp climate, with moderate winters, cool summers, a precipitation of 20–25 SU 137 BC 137 inches yearly, and a high proportion of cloudy days. The poor glacial soils and the humid climate are favorable to the growth of mixed forests, where coniferous stands alternate with oak, birch, and aspen clusters, and the development of hay meadows. Except for oil shale in Estonia, peat, and construction materials (clay, sand, and limestone), the region SU is poor in mineral resources.

162 BC 162 The total population of the Baltic Region is about 6 millions, of which 2.7 millions live in Lithuania, 1.8 millions in Latvia, 1 million in Estonia, and 600,000 in Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian SFSR. In addition to the titular nationalities of the three republics, the population includes the Latgals of eastern Latvia, who are related to Latvians, as well as Russians, Belorussians, Jews, Poles, and Swedes. With the exception of Lithuania, where large villages are common, the rural population lives in small hamlets of three to seven households. About one third SU of the population is urban and resides in small towns.

631 BC ●631 The three Baltic republics, each of which represents an ethnographic unit, marked by a uniformity of language, history, and culture, were part of the Russian Empire prior to the First World War and became firmly linked with the Russian economy through trade and transportation routes. Following the Bolshevik Revolution, they separated from Russia and constituted themselves as separate independent states. In 1940, following Soviet military penetration, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were annexed to the USSR as union republics. Because of the relatively higher level of material prosperity, special consideration was given to the republics with respect to administrative organization. Instead of introducing the current administrative structure of rayon and

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SU 631 BC 631 village Soviet, the USSR government at first retained the existing divisions (*uyezd* and *volost*) and only gradually introduced the village Soviets. This process was completed in 1950, when the regular Soviet administrative system (rayon-village Soviet) was introduced into Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Lithuania, the most populous of the three republics, was also divided into oblasts. In the northern part of East Prussia, however, which was assigned to the USSR by the Potsdam Conference of 1945 and was organized as the Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian SFSR, no attempt was made to establish any kind of German or other autonomous unit. The German population, greatly reduced by evacuation before the Russian occupation, became a small minority among the Russians that immigrated from the central part of the European USSR. The Soviet administrative system, with all its attributes, was established in the new oblast as a matter of course.

SU 241 BC 241 The climatic conditions of the Baltic Region are generally favorable for agricultural development. Rye, oats, and barley are the most common grain crops, and potatoes are widely grown. Flax is cultivated largely for the production of linseed oil. Extensive hay meadows, fodder grasses, and forage grains support intensive dairy farming, especially toward the north. Hogs are raised on root vegetables. The chief agricultural export items are butter, eggs, and meat products (mainly bacon).

SU 438* BC 438 Except for the processing of oil shale in Estonia, the industries are centered in the ports and produce textiles, machines, and chemicals. Lumber is an important raw material for paper and plywood industries. The region has a dense rail network, in which the main trunk lines lead from the central European USSR to the large Baltic port cities. The chief centers are Tallin (Tallinn) Riga, Vil'nyus (Vilnius) Kaunas, and Kaliningrad.

Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic

Capital, Vil'nyus (Vilnius); area, 31,200, population, 2,700,000

SU 133* BC 133 The Lithuanian SSR is the southernmost of the three Baltic republics. It has the shortest coast line, only 25 miles long in the area of Klaypeda (Klaipėda). Its generally level terrain rises gently in the morainic hills of the western and the eastern sections. Lakes and swamps abound in the depressions. The forests which once covered the entire region have been largely cleared and now comprise only 20 percent of the area. The republic is drained by the Neman (Nemunas) and its affluents, the Viliya (Neris), the Nevyazh (Nevėžys), and the Dubisa (Dubysa) rivers

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on the right, and the Sheshupa (Šešupė) on the left. The Neman is navigable below Kaunas, and for shallow-draught vessels below Alitus (Alytus).

The Lithuanians represent about four fifths of the total population and, except for small Latvian and Belorussian minorities, make up the bulk of the rural population. The principal non-Lithuanian groups, Russians, Jews, and Poles, belong chiefly to the urban elements. The rural settlements are villages of a much larger type than the small farming communities generally found in Latvia and Estonia.

The long-contested Vil'nyus district was awarded to Lithuania following the partition of Poland in 1939. In 1940, when Lithuania joined the USSR as a union republic, it also annexed from the Belorussian SSR a narrow strip of territory with a predominantly Lithuanian population. Its present territorial configuration was completed in January, 1945, when it reacquired the Memelland, which had been ceded to Germany in 1939.

In 1950 Lithuania was divided into the oblasts of Vil'nyus, Kaunas, Klaypeda, and Shaulyay.

Agriculture is the principal branch of the economy. Grains cover the major part of the sown area, mostly rye and oats. Potatoes are an important crop in connection with the raising of hogs; flax and forage grasses (mainly clover) are sown in rotation. A few areas are under sugar beets. In addition to hogs, dairy cattle and poultry are extensively raised.

Dairy farming forms the basis for the chief industries of the republic. Butter and dairy plants, meat-packing plants, and tanneries are scattered throughout the entire region. Sugar is milled in a number of places, including Mariyampole (Marijampolė) and Panevezhis (Panevėžys).

Lumbering furnishes raw material for woodworking plants and paper mills. The glass and cement industry is being developed under the postwar Five-Year Plan; peat-based power plants are under construction at Kaunas and Shaulyay. Fisheries are important along the coast, near Klaypeda. Textiles are manufactured from imported silk, wool, and cotton. The only local fuel resource is peat, which is processed widely into briquettes. Building materials are quarried. To be noted also are the health resorts of Birshtonas (Birštonas) and Druskininkay (Druskininkai) on the Neman River, south of Kaunas, and the sand-dune resorts on the coast in the vicinity of Klaypeda. Meat, bacon, butter, flax, and lumber products are the principal export items.

SU 490 BALTIC REGION
361 Narva, on the Narva River between Lake Peipus and the Gulf of
BC Finland, is an old fortress city, with the forts of Ivangorod and Her-
361 mannstadt on opposite banks of the river. It is noted as a textile center, the home of the Krengol'm (Kreenholm) cotton and linen mill, powered by a hydroelectric plant on the Narva River. The suburb of Ivangorod, on the right bank of the Narva, was placed into Leningrad Oblast of the Russian SFSR as the result of a boundary change in 1945.

Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian SFSR)

Capital, Kaliningrad; area, *c.* 6,100, population, 600,000

SU 631 Kaliningrad Oblast was organized in the northern part of East Prussia,
BC north of a line passing north of Goldap and Braniewo (German
631 *Braunsberg*), which was assigned by the Berlin Conference in 1945 to the USSR. The oblast lies on the Baltic Sea and is bordered in the east by the Lithuanian SSR along the Neman River and in the south by
SU 133* Poland. The territory is level lowland rising slightly toward the south
BC and characterized by a humid climate, with mild winters and cool sum-
133 mers. It is drained by the Neman in the northeast and by the Pregel' in the southeast. Along the coast it includes portions of the two lagoon-like inlets characteristic of this section of the Baltic Sea—Kurland Lagoon in the north and Vistula Lagoon in the south. Each lagoon is separated from the sea by a long, narrow sand bar (*Nehrung*), which leaves only a narrow passage at the northern end. Amber, peat, and lignite are the chief mineral resources.

SU 631 As in the case of other territories formerly held by an enemy nation
563 (Japanese part of Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands), no provision was
BC made to establish the northern part of East Prussia as an autonomous
631 area. Instead, the German population which was left at the time of the
563 Russian occupation, estimated at 100,000, was deprived of minority rights similar to those provided for other nationalities in the USSR. Only in the field of education did the Russian administration officially acknowledge the existence of a German minority by establishing a limited number of German schools. After a brief existence as a special okrug,
SU the area was organized as Königsberg Oblast in April, 1946, and re-
167 named Kaliningrad Oblast in July, 1946. Since a Russian majority is
BC mandatory in the population of the oblasts of the Russian SFSR, Rus-
167 sian immigration into the oblast was organized from the central European USSR, where a relatively high population density prevails in oblasts such as Smolensk, Bryansk, Pskov, Novgorod, Kostroma,